

The Antwerp Jesuit Cornelius Hazart as an author of dialogue pamphlets

Cornelius Hazart (1617-1690) was a prolific author. Amongst many other things, he published a monumental four volume Church History (*De Kerckelyke Historie vanden Gheheelen Wereldt*, 1667-1671) and dozens of pamphlets in which he argued that only Roman Catholics could expect salvation and that their church was by far superior to the various competing Protestant institutions (Martens, 2012). Many of these pamphlets were presented as imaginary, but seemingly realistic dialogues between various characters.

In recent years, Dutch scholars have paid attention to the genre of dialogue pamphlets (Dingemanse 2008). They have argued that such dialogue pamphlets were a typical feature of the 'discussion culture' that characterized the Dutch Republic (Frijhoff and Spies, 1999). In the Habsburg Netherlands power relations were more vertically structured than in the Dutch Republic. But just as in the Republic, literacy levels in these regions remained high and a reading culture was firmly rooted amongst urban populations (Jacobs and Verberckmoes, 2006). Therefore authorities made use of pamphlets to win over public opinion. Due to their realistic settings, dialogue pamphlets were particularly suited to enact power relations and to enhance the confessionalisation process.

In this paper, I shall analyze Hazart's dialogue pamphlets. As a preacher of the Antwerp St Ignatius church he was a well-known polemicist. In particular, after the Peace of Münster, when relationships with the Dutch Republic were restored, Hazart used this form. Apparently, he and his fellow clergymen feared that Catholics, who had frequent contacts with northerners, would be lured into Protestantism. Not surprisingly, a detailed reading of Hazart's dialogue pamphlets reveals that he emphasized the Catholic stance on controversial points of doctrine. Moreover, and maybe more importantly, he ridiculed his counterparts, the Protestant ministers. Thereby he created powerful stereotypes that would be deeply rooted in the collective imagery of the post Tridentine Catholic Netherlands.

Source material

A corpus of dialogue pamphlets by Cornelius Hazart has been compiled by searches into the STCV-database.

Basic references

C. Dingemanse, *Rap van tong, scherp van pen: Literaire discussiecultuur in Nederlandse praatjespamfletten (circa 1600-1750)*. (Hilversum, 2008).

W. Frijhoff and M. Spies, 1650. *Bevochten eendracht* (The Hague, 1999).

M. Jacobs and J. Verberckmoes, 'Populair drukwerk' in P. Janssens ed. *België in de 17de eeuw. De Spaanse Nederlanden en het Prinsbisdom Luik. Band II: Cultuur en Leefwereld* (Brussels and Gent, 2006) 106-110.

B. Martens, 'Nederlandse religieuze controversepublicaties en de kunst van het argumenteren in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden (ca. 1591-c. 1688)', in *Trajecta*, 19-20 (2012), 241-272.